

Hocart—Lau Islands, Fiji

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881 was provided by Nasangalan, and one sheet of bark cloth (*ngatu*) provided by the ladies of Tumbou, all of which were taken to the native medical practitioner who performed the operation.

573 After circumcision a boy ceases to sleep in the family house (*vale soso*),
834 but lives in a men's house (*mbure*). He must not henceforth let women see his penis. In old times young men did not put on a loin cloth or have intercourse with women till they had pubic hairs and beards. Circumcision was the occasion of their putting on clothes.

884 After circumcision a boy is called a man (*tangane*) and must be grown up in his ways; he must not cry, but endure and work.

CONFINEMENT OF GIRLS

881 Formerly when the daughter of a nobleman was about fifteen to seven-
teen she was "forbidden the sunshine" (*tambu singa*), while remaining
indoors she was anointed with oil and turmeric (*rerenge*) to make her light
302 in hue and plump, to make her into a lady (*vakamaramataki*). She ate
feasts, meat, or fish (*kana vaka i lava*) every day. She remained in the
upper end of the house and might not come out into the center. Food was
brought and left in the house; if anyone appeared while she was eating
754 she retreated into a corner so as not to be seen, lest a person with "raw
eyes" should see her and make her of a bad color. She hid only if a new
person came into the house; those who stayed in the house remained con-
tinuously and did not go home. She might bathe while forbidden the sun-
shine, but in doing so wrapped herself up (*pupulou*) that the sun might not
spoil her body; if she met anyone she hid in the bush. At night she might
not go out except for a call of nature.

The following account has been given:

Melaia was thus confined along with Andimaitonga, her father's elder brother's
daughter. She was very young then and had her hair cut. The object of the confine-
ment was that she should fill out quickly. Samisone Feoko, her father's younger
brother's son was born then so Melaia went to stay with the mother of the child and
all four were anointed together with turmeric, the mother, the child, and the girls.
644 This was a common practice, and the girls came out at the baptism. If the daughter
of Roko Sau was forbidden the sunshine a daughter of Tui Tumbou or the herald
would be confined with her. Roko Sau's daughter would order them about. The
various families of the girls would bring food.

857 Some confinements lasted a year. Melaia did not find it dull; she and her com-
panions played with dolls (*vakataluluvu*), which consisted of a whale's tooth, or
797 cowry, or stick, and were laid down like a baby; but the early missionaries forbade
dolls so they are not used now. Some children did not like to stop in the house all
day, and so ran away. The old people would be angry, but the girl would not be
forbidden the sunshine again.

When their period was over the girls would go to bathe in the sea, were
dressed in the best bark cloth, and people might come and see them. The

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sioner works with the native provincial head, who is a local high chief and bears the recent political title of *roko*. The *roko* is in charge of the native affairs of the province. The native administration of each province is in the hands of a provincial council, presided over by the secretary for native affairs and composed of representatives from the district councils and certain native government officials. The provincial council sits annually. 636

Each province is composed of a number of districts. The districts frequently demark minor historic political divisions headed by a local chief. Each district is administered by a native government official entitled *mbuli* (district headman). The *mbuli* is usually a local chief. He presides over a district council composed of local chiefs and village headmen in the district. The district council sits monthly. It controls the domestic affairs of each district and appoints the village headmen. Each district is composed of a number of villages. A village headman (entitled *turanga ni koro*) is in charge of each village. He is head of the village assembly in which all important affairs of the village are discussed.

On each island there is a native resident missionary, trained in a mission school and appointed by the Wesleyan Methodist Mission, in charge of a mission church. The natives contribute a quarterly tithe to the mission and attend church on Sundays. Their children are baptized, and Christian marriage and death rites supplement the native ones. The influence of the mission in Lau has been discussed elsewhere (23, pp. 110-123). 797

Each island has at least one native schoolmaster in charge of a village school. He has been trained in a mission or a government teachers' training school. He teaches the children reading and writing in the Mbauan dialect and simple arithmetic during two or three hours several mornings a week. The problems of education in Lau have been discussed elsewhere (23, pp. 140-145). 871

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

SOCIAL GROUPS

First the social groups of Lau and then the organization of each village will be described in detail. 621

The largest kinship unit in Lau is the phratry (*yavusa*). It is based on the historic settlement of the islands. Each phratry consists of a group of clans (*matanggali*). The clans formerly occupied hamlets (*tokatoka*) in garden lands or clearings in the bush. Since the abolition of warfare in Lau the hamlets have moved to the coast and united into villages, many retaining their local unity. Hence the clans are really clan-hamlets, both kinship and geographic units. They are divided into subclans (called *tokatoka* or *mbatchi ni lovo*), which are subdivided into families or households (*vuvale*). 631 618

The largest geographical unit in Lau is the chiefdom (formerly called *mata ni tu*), which consists of groups of islands or minor chiefdoms united in tributary relationship to the high chief at Lakemba. In each minor chiefdom are several villages (*koro*). Each village is composed of several clan-hamlets.

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chief of Tokalau. Undu village has a chief called Tui Undu. He is from the Valakevoro clan and receives a village offering of first fruits. The village of Muanaïra has a chief from the Nggilo clan. 622

The title of chief of the ceremonial ground (*tui ra* or *tui rara*) is found on every island. It is held by a clan of the land group. Presentations of food to the chief and subsequent distributions to the people take place on the ceremonial ground. The duty of the chief of the ceremonial ground is to divide the food so that each clan receives its share, according to rank and size. 624

Clan titles, now obsolete, but formerly found on Kambara are chief headman (*sau turanga*), held by the Nanggara clan headman; master of war (*mbatchi ndau ni valu*), held by Matasoata or Valakevoro clans, Undu; food master (*mbatchi ni kakana*) held by Nawî of Lomatchi. 618

RANK WITHIN THE CLAN

Rank within the clan is regulated by the principles of primogeniture, seniority, and cross-cousin marriage. The direct descendant of the first-born (*ulu matua*) son of the originator of the clan holds the highest rank within the clan, and of subclans which comprise the clan his takes precedence by seniority. The elder of either sex takes precedence over the younger throughout the lineage in each generation. Rank within the clan is discussed on pages 58-64. 618 554

MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIP

MARRIAGE

Formerly polygyny was practiced by high ranking men who could afford several wives, especially by the chiefs. Monogamy, however, was the rule among people of lower rank. Polyandry was unknown. Today, as a result of missionary influence, Lauan society is monogamous. 595 593 797

CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE

A man preferably marries his *watchi* (cross cousin, his mother's brother's daughter or his father's sister's daughter, real or classificatory), but not all marriages fall within the preferred type. Formerly it was not uncommon for a chief to take two sisters as wives or for a man to marry the sister of his deceased wife. It is not rare for a man to marry his brother's widow. 582

Clan exogamy is the rule and a study of interclan marriage based on clan pedigrees shows that there is a tendency for certain clans to intermarry. This tendency is strongest on Ongea and Fulanga and weakest on Kambara and Mothe. It is probable that cross-cousin marriage is also more frequently practiced on the two isolated southern islands of Ongea and Fulanga and least on Kambara and Mothe. The genealogies from the five islands visited are not sufficient to furnish conclusive data on this point. 582 618

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usually considered members of his mother's clan. As a rule a woman belongs to the clan of her father although after marriage she lives and functions with her husband's clan. 591
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ADOPTION

Widows (*ndawai*), orphans (*luve ni yalo*, literally child of the ghost), and illegitimate children (*luve ni sala*, literally child of the path) are transferred from one clan to another by means of the adoption (*lakovi*) ceremony, a form of affinal exchange. 597
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A widow usually returns to her own people. When her husband dies, her brother or a ranking member of her clan presents a whale's tooth or other property, by means of the usual presentation ceremony, to the clan of her husband with the request that the woman be allowed to return to her clan. This is called *lakovi*. If the property is accepted the widow is free to return. She usually takes at least some of her children with her. These children must also be formally transferred from the clan of their father to that of their mother, by means of the adoption ceremony. If both of a child's parents die, his mother's clan may adopt the child. Frequently, however, the father's clan retains the boys. A child adopted into his mother's clan still belongs theoretically to his father's clan, although he functions with that of his mother, for the adoption ceremony does not affect a man's clan membership, which is fixed by the rule of descent. It marks the transfer of an individual from one clan to another, and the clan losing a member is compensated for its loss by gifts of property from the clan receiving a member.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

Children born out of wedlock are numerous in Lau. According to the natives, illegitimate children formerly had a definite status in the community and were not considered undesirable. They were usually reared in the clan of their mother under the guardianship of the maternal grandfather. Although theoretically they belonged to the clan of their father, they had to be formally adopted into it by means of the adoption ceremony in order to become active members. A child then enjoyed all the rights of full membership in his father's clan. He inherited a share in the clan lands, as did the legitimate sons, and exercised the rights of a *vatu* to his mother's people. 597
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Since the coming of the missionaries, the attitude toward illegitimate children has changed. A child born out of wedlock is not allowed to be baptized in the mission church. He may be baptized, however, in the house where the mother lives. An unmarried, pregnant woman becomes the subject of village gossip, and members of the community who have been strongly influenced in their behavior patterns by the mission show their disapproval by ignoring the birth feast, to which the whole village is invited. An illegitimate child is still considered a member of his father's clan, but today he is not accepted to full membership in the clan and is not allowed to inherit clan lands. 848
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The custom of confining a chief's daughter for several months in order to bleach and fatten her (*tambu singa*) is not found in southern Lau. Informants say it existed formerly in Tumbou, Lakemba (Hocart, 15, p. 149), but that it is the "way of the devil" (*vakatevoro*), that is pre-Christian. When I visited the village of Tavuki, Kandavu, the chief's daughter was being thus confined. Natives of Namuka said that the custom was also practiced in the village of Nakasale, Kandavu.

Formerly adolescent girls in Lau were tattooed on the thighs, the corners of the mouth, and the fingers. The custom of tattooing (*nggai*) was forbidden by the missionaries, and there are no longer any tattooed women in Lau.

Tchosaia of Kambara said that all girls in Lau were formerly tattooed, but Kalo of Fulanga said that only some were tattooed and that of these a number did not finish the whole process because of the pain. Tattooing, according to informants, made the girls grow strong and develop fully. Joana of Kambara said that tattooed women looked better, that their bodies grew stronger and remained firm longer, and that the wrinkles of age were concealed by the design.

The following description of the tattooing process was obtained on the islands of Kambara, Fulanga, and Mothe from aged informants who had not actually witnessed the process but had obtained the description from women who had been tattooed.

The tattooing was begun shortly after a girl's first menstruation by a female specialist (*ndau veinggia*, *ndau veisau*, or *ndau ni mbatchi*), who had learned the art of tattooing from her mother. She felt the patient's thighs to determine whether or not the girl was ready for the operation. It was initiated by a feast and was performed in three or four installments with a lapse of several months between them. The entire process covered a period of a year or more. If a girl had sexual intercourse either before or during this period the operation would be more painful and the wounds would require more time to heal than otherwise. Two or three girls were usually tattooed in succession.

The operation was performed in a special tattoo hut (*vale ni veinggia* or *vale ni veisau*) located on the edge of the village. This consisted of a lean-to thatched with plaited coconut leaves or an unoccupied sleeping house appropriated for the occasion. The tattoo hut was tabu to men, who jokingly referred to it as the "Black Bottom" (*Sotho Loaloe*). A pointed instrument (*kau ni veinggia*) was used. One to three points consisting of barracuda or shark's teeth, bones of a fish (*sokisoki* or *wai*), or thorns of the lemon tree were attached to a short haft, adz fashion. The pointed end of the instrument was dipped into a black dye made of *sikethi* nut or the pitch of the *yangai* tree. It was then placed on the patient's skin, and struck with a mallet (*tchitolo*) of hibiscus wood. When not in use the instrument was hung in the smoke above the fireplace. After the blood had been wiped away, the wounds were covered with barkcloth.

Dye from the *sikethi* nut was made by the process used today to obtain dye for barkcloth designs. After removing the shells, twenty or thirty nuts were strung on the midrib of a coconut leaflet (*sasa*) and burned over a fire under an earthen pot, on which the black soot collected. On islands like Fulanga where *sikethi* is scarce, it was imported from Mothe, Namuka, Oneata, or Vatoa. To make black powder from *yangai* pitch, lumps of pitch were placed in a fire and the soot from the smoke was caught on a pot above.

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FOREWORD

000 **L**ONELY AND ISOLATED in eastern Fiji, Kambara rises abruptly out of the bright Pacific, a few square miles of limestone grown with primeval forest. Here bushy-haired, brown natives dwell in huts of thatch and wrest a living from the spirit-haunted jungle and the shark-infested sea. They work and play, feel and think in a vivid world of their own—a hazardous world where the struggle for existence is keen, land is poor and food is scarce.

131 Kambara is one of the southern islands of the Lau archipelago
177 of Fiji (see maps, facing pp. 1 and 21). On a large map of the South Seas the Lau islands are represented by a line of dots running north and south along the eastern margin of Fiji, about one-third of the distance between Viti Levu and the Tongan archipelago. This small isolated group has been in contact with western civilization for over a century. Although the native culture has been altered considerably through western influence, no white man has ever gained a foothold in southern Lau, and the natives have retained ownership of all the land.

177 There are three great modern influences at work in Lau: the missionary and teacher, the government official, and the trader. Christian missionaries landed on Lakemba in central Lau in 1835 and slowly their teachings spread. When Fiji
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[640] was annexed by Great Britain in 1874, Lau became part of the British Crown Colony. Later, trading cutters occasionally called here for coconut oil, trochus shell and bêche-de-mer, a sea slug relished by the Chinese. As the market price of copra rose during the first quarter of this century, coconut plantations were developed. Copra was exchanged for western

BUSHY-HAIRED BROWN NATIVES

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and in front of him is the wooden bowl in which the drink²⁷²
is mixed. The root is crushed between stones and mixed with²⁷⁶
water, strained, and passed to the drinkers with prescribed
movements and phases accompanied by the ceremonial clapping of hands.

Formerly on ordinary occasions the men wore only a short²⁹¹
waist cloth made of barkcloth, and the women a fringe like
a hula skirt made of strips of the soft inner bark of the
hibiscus. Unmarried girls wore the briefest possible fringe.³⁰⁴
The area covered by this fringe was tattooed, so without her
skirt a girl looked as though she were wearing a closely fitted
pair of shorts, printed with geometric black designs on a
brown background.

Tattooing was forbidden by the missionaries, and the last^[197]
tattooed woman in Lau died a few years ago. According to
old women, the tattooing process was extremely painful. It
was done after the girl's first menstruation in three or four
installments, and covered a period of a year or more. The
operation was performed in a special tabu hut which the men^[522]
jokingly called the "black bottom". An old woman known
as a tattoo expert dipped an adz-like instrument pointed with
a shark's tooth or fish bone into a black dye, placed the point
on the skin and struck it with a wooden hammer. If the girl
accepted lovers during the process the pain would increase.
When it was over, her fingers and the corners of her mouth
were tattooed to show that she was marriageable.

The men of Lau were never tattooed. According to an old
tale, when the Tongans first visited Lau they were so pleased
with the tattooed Lauan women that they resolved to in-
troduce the custom into their own country so they sent a man
back to Tonga with the message: "Tattoo the women but^[173]
not the men." The messenger repeated his message over and
over until when he arrived in Tonga he was saying: "Tattoo
the men and not the women," and this explains why in Tonga
the men and not the women are tattooed.

174 visiting the group for at least two centuries. They came mainly to secure fragrant sandalwood, bright red paraquet feathers, and large double sailing canoes of hardwood. All these valuable articles were absent in Tonga and very rare even in Fiji. Sandalwood with a strong scent, used by the Tongans to perfume their coconut oil, grew only at Mbua (pronounced Em-bú-a), the westernmost point of Vanua Levu. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the source was discovered by Chinese traders who soon exhausted it completely. Brilliant red paraquet feathers, which the Tongans traded to the Samoans, for bordering precious, finely woven Samoan mats, were obtained in Taveuni, the island east of Vanua Levu. Hardwood was found only in southern Lau. In these three parts of Fiji, especially in Lau, Tongan influence has been strong.

175 When the first European missionaries to Fiji landed at
197 Lakemba in 1835 the Tongans had gained a great deal of political power. For the next forty years, curiously enough, it was mainly the Tongans who were responsible for the spread of European influence, especially Christianity, in the Lau islands, and to a considerable extent in Fiji proper. The missionaries came to Lau from their mission in Tonga and were familiar with the Tongan language, which was spoken to a considerable extent on Lakemba. For some time their only converts in Lau were Tongans. The mission made slow headway among the Lauans until 1849 when the high chief was finally converted and the gospel spread rapidly through the group.

175 Meanwhile, however, the Tongans gained prestige through the mission. They began to cause trouble to the Lauan high chief who complained about them to the Tongan king. In the middle of the nineteenth century he sent his warrior nephew, Maafu (pronounced Má-a-fu), to govern the Tongan colony in Lau. Maafu organized a fleet of war canoes, manned by Tongan warriors and armed with cannon which he used on canoes for

435 (*tambua*) of the sperm whale. The whale's tooth serves as
436 a medium of exchange and as a means by which wealth can
be accumulated, condensed, and stored. It cannot, however,
serve as a standard of value because its ceremonial significance
imparts to it an immeasurably sacred value which cannot be
compared with the exchange value of other objects. The
[556] indefinite term "big" (*leivu*) is used to express victory in the
economic competition of gift exchange. The donor whose
gift is "big" wins prestige.

431 The Lauan principle of gift exchange emphasizes communal
556 industry and group prestige rather than individual enterprise.
476 It would completely discourage initiative were it not reciprocal
and self-perpetuating. In an exchange of property each party
seeks to give more than he receives and thus through a material
loss to secure a social gain. But the gain in prestige is not
permanent. A man or group must continue to distribute in
order to maintain the acquired status. Hence it is really the
far-sighted, industrious man or group which wins in the long
run. Work is rewarded and laziness loses out.

732 The case of Wai illustrates the point. Wai is a half-caste
158 whose mother was a native from the island of Komo and
554 whose father was a European. He is the most maladjusted
individual on Kambara. He is physically handicapped not
only because of his small bones and relatively short stature
but also because he limps badly. Any physical defect such
as lameness, blindness, or elephantiasis is mocked by the
natives, and on this account Wai has had his share of ridicule.

● [137] Besides, Wai is classed as a bastard which, since the advent of
[648] the missionaries, has been severely censured. Since his father
was a European, the natives insist that he has no clan and
no land. However, he has been given the use of land in the
clan of his wife's mother who came from Tokalau.

158 Wai is known as the laziest man on Kambara. At the
554 time of our visit to Kambara he had a house in Tokalau, but
the thatched roof leaked, and he with his wife and bastard

177 life and the inhabitants changed from collectors to gardeners.
241 More recently, maize, Chinese cabbage, onions, and other
plants have been added to the list, but these latter have not
greatly altered the native diet. Since its introduction in the
177 nineteenth century, tobacco has been in great demand. Men
276 and women smoke as much of the strong Fijian grown weed
as they can beg, borrow, or steal. They roll it into cigarettes
wrapped in dried banana leaves, and use a burning brand for
a light unless matches are available. However, in spite of the
great demand, little tobacco is grown in the southern islands.
Frequently the natives cannot wait until the local product is
dried, and they scorch the green tobacco leaves on coals before
smoking them. To dry properly, tobacco leaves must be
hung up for several weeks in Lau. During this time they
are in constant danger of being filched. Once while explor-
[718] ing a sacred cave which the natives were afraid to enter, I
came upon several pounds of tobacco leaves hung up to
dry. A bold and original soul had solved the tobacco prob-
lem by allowing his ancestor ghosts to protect his leaves for
him.

621 The economic life of the natives has also been affected by
177 the concentration of the population in coast villages. This
476 separated the people from their gardens and necessitated a
journey, usually of some distance, to work the land and harvest
the crops. Although the new social grouping did not alter
the basic economic unit, which remained the household or
the sub-clan, it led to the cooperation of a larger group than
heretofore, namely the village, in communal enterprises such
as house and canoe building and fishing expeditions.

177 Other changes due to the introduction of Christianity have
797 had a marked effect on the native economic life. The observa-
805 tion of Sunday and the weekly cycle brought into economic
life a regularity later worked into a definite schedule by the
colonial officials through native regulations. This weekly
schedule is observed today. Saturday is set aside for preparing

food and washing clothes for the Sunday ceremonies and feast, and Monday is a day of recovery from the Sabbath. Tuesday and Friday are reserved for work on the gardens, and Wednesday is used for other activities, including care of the village and houses. ¹⁷⁷ 797 ● 805

The mission church requires a quarterly tithe from each member. When the copra industry was at its height, this tithe was paid in money, but was being paid in produce when we visited Lau, for after the slump in copra there was very little money in the southern islands. This obligation, as well as the native tax imposed by the colonial government, makes further regular demands upon the industry of the people.⁹⁶ 797

The growing demand for regularity in economic life conflicts with native psychology. The Lauans, as well as most non-westernized peoples, have a natural rhythm of work which differs fundamentally from the mechanical regularity imposed by a machine age civilization. They prefer to work and work best at irregular intervals interspersed with frequent rest periods, ceremonials, and feasts. This tendency toward irregular work rhythms is counteracted to a certain extent in Lau by the daily recurring problem of subsistence. At the same time even in this difficult environment the natives manage, by living at a minimum level of subsistence, to adhere to their preferred tempo. 461

The attempt to regulate the work habits of the natives was but one result of the gradual penetration of the principles of western economy into the group. Another was the introduction of western trade articles. Trade in imported articles focused the essential differences between the native and the western economic systems, especially regarding exchange of goods. Both the early missionaries and the government officials frowned upon the native soliciting system. Soliciting 439 431 656

⁹⁶ In 1933-34 the usual government head tax of £1 and the provincial tax of £1 per year were not required of the natives of Lau province on account of the low price of copra and the limited resources of the group. [651]

dark stormy night when, having sailed by canoe from Mothe⁵⁷⁷ to the horseshoe-shaped island of Fulanga, we were trying to find Naivindamu village on the shore of the central lagoon. As we sailed blindly about in wind and rain we barely missed one of the mushroom-shaped coral islets which dot the lagoon. One of the three sailors regularly blew a conch shell, the Lauan signal of distress, but there was no response. He had a slight^[201] hope that the natives, upon hearing it, would build a signal fire, he said. Finally he cried: "*Raramal*" (light). After some minutes I discerned a faint glow ahead, which the boys said was from one of the village kitchen fires. It grew brighter as we approached. In a few minutes the canoe was beached and we were surrounded by faces peering through the darkness and by cries of "*Papalangi!*" (the native word for foreigner or European). They had heard the conch blasts, they said, but the night was too wet and stormy to leave their kitchen fires.

The typical response to treatment by modern medicine also¹⁵⁶ reflects the native psychological set. Upon request I once¹⁵⁷ treated a young Tokalau girl who had received a deep leg wound from a large fish. After the girl had recovered, her father came to me frequently with requests for tobacco, kava, etc. According to native ideology, I owed him a debt for having been allowed to cure the girl, because he could not conceive of my treating her if I had not believed it was somehow to my advantage.

In order to understand the native outlook on life today let⁷⁶⁹ us review briefly what is known of the old Lauan religion.⁷⁹⁷ Before the introduction of Christianity, the most important superhuman beings in Lau were the ancestor gods, probably introduced into Lau by the Polynesian immigrants who came from Viti Levu. The most powerful ancestors of noble clans were eventually deified after death. When the missionaries landed in Lau the ancestor cult was not only the key to the native religion but also the basis of the social and economic life.

769 It reinforced the desire for prestige, based on rank, success in
● 797 warfare and wealth, which gave the culture its definite secular
bias. These ancestor gods are still feared by many old Lauans
today.

769 The ancestor gods were worshipped in temples—small
346 thatched huts with disproportionately high gabled roofs and
778 oval shaped ground plan. The temples were elevated on stone-
793 flanked mounds surrounded by fragrant plants, for fragrance
was associated with sacredness in the minds of the natives. In
them were kept sacred objects belonging to the clan, such as
elaborately carved ceremonial clubs. A hereditary priest
officiated at each temple. He propitiated the gods with offer-
ings such as food, kava, whales' teeth, and human sacrifices,
especially the bodies of enemies captured in warfare. All that
remain today of these temples are the stone-flanked mounds on
which offerings are occasionally made secretly.

776 Most of the gods of the upper class were war gods. Before
726 a raid the priest consulted the war gods regarding the auspici-
793 ousness of an attack, and prayed that "mana" be granted the
clan warriors and their weapons. Without the approval of the
gods the raid would not be successful. If the god responded,
the priest's body began to twitch and shake. As the god
entered his body the priest writhed in grotesque contortions.
He was bathed in sweat. The movements became more and
more violent until finally in a queer shrill voice the god spoke
through the priest.

767 Williams gives the following account of this spirit possession.
793 "One who intends to consult the oracle dresses and oils himself
and, accompanied by a few others, goes to the priest . . .
When the party enters, he (the priest) rises, and sits so that his
back is near to the white cloth by which the god visits him,
while the others occupy the opposite side of the *wibure*
(temple). The principal person presents a whale's tooth,
states the purpose of the visit, and expresses a hope that the
god will regard him with favor. Sometimes there is placed

THE CANNIBALS ARE CONVERTED

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may kill, harm, or eat it. The appearance of the red shark is still considered a good omen, and it is propitiated frequently from canoes or on the beach with offerings of food, kava or wreaths. It was also tabu for commoners of Kambara to kill or eat the red rooster. 565
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[825]

Members of the upper class formerly believed that all the inhabitants of the Lau islands journeyed after death to a jumping-off place called Nai Thimbathimba (pronounced Nai Thim'-ba-thim'-ba) on the west or northwest side of each island, and from there sailed by canoe to Nai Thombothombo (pronounced Nai Thom'-bo-thom'-bo) at the extreme western end of Vanua Levu. The commoners, on the other hand, believed in a local abode of the dead. 775
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This was the native outlook on life at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the first Christian missionaries to Fiji landed at Lakemba. 797

THE CANNIBALS
ARE CONVERTED

*Endua na kunea maivei na mbula?
Sa na kunei mai Mburotu Kula*

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*Where shall we find the life?
It is to be found in the Red Paradise.*

-From the teachings of Navosavakundua⁴⁸

The Christian gospel, based on the importance of the spiritual life of the individual, on monotheism, and on brotherly love, presented a striking contrast to the more worldly native outlook on life which the missionaries encountered in Fiji. Christian ideals such as peace, the sanctity of human life, and monogamy were equally foreign to the Fijian before contact with the west. The missionaries introduced the idea of heaven and hell with the word "devil" (*tevoru*) into native ideology. They reduced the native hierarchy of ancestor gods to a hierarchy of devils ruled by the all powerful Christian 797

⁴⁸ A. B. Brewster, op. cit., p. 251.

797 Deity. The old mythology and much of the folklore was suppressed. The Bible was translated into the Mbauan dialect, which was reduced to written form and later became the official language of Fiji. A death struggle was waged against the native priesthood, temples, warfare, cannibalism, human sacrifice, and polygamy.

For at least fifteen years the natives resisted the new religion. Finally, however, with the gradual infiltration of western trade articles such as gunpowder, fire arms, and metal tools, the strong native opposition broke down. As soon as the chiefs were convinced by these material objects that the white man's God had more powerful "mana" than their own gods, they accepted the white man's religion.

Once embraced by the chiefs, the gospel spread quickly throughout the group. It was carried into the isolated parts of Fiji like southern Lau by native converts. Mission churches, built in the style of native houses, were established on each island, and native missionaries, trained at mission centers like Lakemba, were put in charge of them. The nobles became pillars of the Church. In the Christianized communities Sunday was introduced as a day of rest and rites. On this day Church services consisting of prayers and responsive readings, a sermon and hymns (translated into Mbauan and accompanied by westernized Tongan music), followed by a native feast, were held. Modified Christian rites were added to the old native ceremonies which marked birth, marriage, and death. The drinking of kava was forbidden, but inas-
[27] much as ceremonial kava drinking along with dancing and the exchange of property marked all important occasions in Lau, the custom was not stamped out. On the contrary, whereas formerly kava was drunk only by men of high rank, now men and women of all classes partake of the beverage.

554 The native religion was so closely integrated with the rest
177 of life that a radical change in it affected the whole culture. Complete suppression of warfare in the group had reverbera-

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tions throughout the native culture. It led to the development of other outlets for the acquisition of prestige, such as the distribution of wealth and the emphasis on craftsmanship. However, part of the tremendous energy formerly devoted to this most vital group activity was suppressed and as a result native life was devitalized. 554 177

The effect of Christianity upon the native spiritual world has been profound. Lowering the old ancestor gods to the status of devils, and raising the Christian Deity to omnipotence has caused a deep conflict of loyalties in the minds of the natives. Even today they feel guilty because they are neglecting their old gods, and they say this neglect is responsible for their present lack of vitality which they characterize as an absence of "mana". Although a few courageous individuals still propitiate their ancestors secretly in the bush, the old religion has been effectively suppressed. Moreover, most of the Fijian mythology, theology, and folklore has been lost. 797 776 182

In spite of the apparent success of the mission, its spiritual message failed to a considerable extent to reach the natives because they were totally unprepared by their outlook on life to comprehend it. Gradually, as the Lauans have adapted western ideas to their own, Christian ceremonial has mingled with native rites. The gospel taught by the missionaries has tended to become a formality marked by a feast every seventh day and important mainly for its social value. The new religion has become a channel for acquiring social prestige. To be a good Christian today gives an individual standing in the community and a native missionary wields considerable power. 797 557 781

Malamala, the native missionary on Kambara, is a native of a noble clan of Tanggu. On account of his office, however, he does not live in Tanggu, but has moved into a large house opposite the mission church in Tokalau. His sacerdotal office and his rank in the upper class make him one of the leading elders of the island, and he is careful to assume great dignity 797

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- 197 in everything he undertakes. Usually when he goes to the other side of the island to conduct services he travels in state
[622] in his canoe, conspicuously decorated with white cowry shells, a symbol of chieftainship. He is dressed in the height of fashion—a fresh white shirt, a black *lavalava* and a blue woolen coat, even on the most sultry day. If he travels by
[554] land he walks slowly, swinging his cane, a symbol of rank. He is followed a few yards behind by his assistant, a youth who carries a small imported satchel. At the beginning of the service he takes from this satchel a Fijian Bible and a pair of spectacles set with plain glass. Attached to one rim is the price tag, which shows that the glasses were bought in the store. Before beginning to read he carefully dons the spectacles, but is no whit disturbed if, in the heat of the service, they slip down the bridge of his nose.

197 Especially did Christianity have a far-reaching effect on the
182 native social organization. The breakdown of the ancestor
631 cult undermined the inner structure of the native system of ranked clans. It took the sacredness out of chieftainship and broke the power of the tabu, which formerly maintained law and order in society. Moreover, the increased emphasis on personality rather than rank weakened the power of the chiefs. The mission tried to uphold chieftainship by encouraging the natives to pay tribute and abide by the commands of their chiefs, and the colonial officials followed mission policy. Their aim was to reinforce the power of the chiefs by appointing them as colonial officials and thus to utilize the native social system for political purposes as far as possible. However, in applying this plan, personality as well as rank had to be considered, and frequently chiefs were passed over in favor of gifted individuals of lower rank. Hence authority formerly held exclusively by the chiefs was divided between chiefs, native government officials, and native missionaries.

178 In recent times individuals deprived of hereditary power
575 and of warfare, their principal emotional outlets, have found

575 enters his votary the men begin to shake and tremble violently.
776 Their flesh twitches. They begin to dance and work them-
782 selves up into a frenzy. Some club one another. In this
state they are insensible to pain. Men are frequently injured
and were in the past occasionally killed during these rites.
While possessed they receive "mana" from their guardian
spirits in the form of inspiration, each along the lines of his
own specialty.

[774] The member with the most "mana" on each island is the
leader of the cult. If he is challenged, a contest is held
during the rites and the least vulnerable wins and takes over
the leadership.

The "Water Baby" cult found its way into southern Lau
from Fiji proper. Mr. Brewster, who spent forty years as a
government official in Fiji, has described the cult as it appeared
in the interior of Viti Levu where it was strong at the end
of the nineteenth century and still practiced in the 1920's.⁴⁹

797 The early missionaries ignored the cult. Compared to more
575 violent practices which they had to combat, such as can-
nibalism, widow strangling, and human sacrifice, it seemed
relatively harmless except that it encouraged laziness and
frequently led to bloodshed. However, when the mission had
become well established in Fiji they demanded its suppression.
The colonial government followed mission policy and made
the practice criminal.

Mr. Brewster's comments on government policy concerning
the cult are interesting. He wrote: ". . . looking down
that long vista of years and after much reflection, I think that
we took a wrong view of the *luveniwai*. There was no need
to regard it so seriously, as in my opinion it was not really
seditious. It led the boys to be cheeky and insubordinate,
and to a certain amount of larceny . . . There were plenty
of native regulations against insubordination, disobedience and
any sort of disturbance. We did not need anything special.

⁴⁹ A. B. Brewster, op. cit., pp. 222-229.

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against *luveniwai* and could have kept the naughty boys in 797●
order with what had been provided previously. Anyway we 575
failed to stamp it out . . . I think there is not much harm
in it so long as the votaries refrain from picking and stealing,
and are duly respectful to their elders, and there is certainly
a fair element of romance and poetry about it."⁵⁰

Mr. Brewster endorsed the introduction of cricket into his 526
district in the hope that the game would give the boys an 575
outlet for their superfluous energy. Cricket clubs were 668
organized and the game became very popular. It was soon
found, however, that cricket was being used as a cloak for
cult activities. In one district the organization aimed to free
the natives from British rule. In imitation of the system of
colonial administration in Fiji they had elected a governor,
chief justice, and chief secretary. The native cult, altered by
the introduction of cricket and organized in imitation of the
colonial government, was being used for political purposes.
The movement was effectively suppressed when the new cult
leaders were sent to jail.

Many other natives besides those of the "Water Baby" cult 794
make the adjustment to modern life by turning to a greater 668
or less extent to their ancestral gods. An example of this is
the rise of the *Tuka* or "Immortality" secret society. About
1873 (forty years after the introduction of Christianity into
Fiji) a secret cult sprang up in the foothills of the Nakauvandra
mountains in northeast Viti Levu. This is the traditional
home of Ndengei, the great snake god and the mythical deity
of Fiji. The leader of the "Immortality" cult was a young
man named Ndukumoi (pronounced En-du-ku-moi) of a
hereditary priest clan. He was not striking in appearance—a
Negroid type of medium height and bleary-eyed from excessive
kava drinking.⁵¹ Ndukumoi left his home and went to
Taveuni, an island off the east coast of Vanua Levu, where

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 230-231.

⁵¹ "The *Tuka* Religion," *Transactions of the Fijian Society*, 1910, 1925, p. 54.

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each taking yams, taro, and plantains, and some named themselves after the particular kind of yams they took, and some from the taro, and others after the plantains, each after the things they took with them when they were sent forth by the spirit (thus accounting for their plant totems), and the place from whence they departed was called Paradise. Then each dwelt in the land at which they arrived, and they settled down and multiplied . . . The common people arrived first and the chiefs followed later on."

Viewing the change in retrospect we see that the missionaries brought to Lau a foreign world view, which differed from their own mainly in its emphasis on the significance of the spiritual life of the individual soul in the next world. The Lauans were opportunists interested in obtaining "mana" expressed in prestige in this world. Success meant honor to their clan and eventual deification. The "mana" concept of the Lauans provided the bridge between the two outlooks on life. By rejection of their own ancestral gods and acceptance of a foreign God as a "mana" giver, they believed they could more effectively attain their ends. The innovation produced profound changes in their culture, especially in the social structure. Most important of these was perhaps the shift in emphasis from clan rank based on supernatural sanctions, to individual status based on social sanctions.

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[99] Lakemba has seven native villages. Tumbou being the largest one in Lau, with a population of 283. The others in order as one goes counter-clockwise along the well kept connecting road are:- Wathiwathi, on the east side of the south-jutting peninsula, 130 natives; Waitambu, three quarters of a mile to the east, 76 inhabitants; Nukunuku at the S.E. corner of the island, at the head of a small bay, 70 natives; Yandrasa, along the banks of a fair size stream, at the N.E. corner, 187 inhabitants; Vakano, about 2 miles to the N.W., 70 natives; and Sasanggalau, with 150 inhabitants, about a mile to the westward at the mouth of the next stream. The west end of the island, opposite the Wankatalatha anchorage, is privately owned. There is a small store, run by Chinese in nearly every village, and a large store run by the Lau Traders, Ltd., at Tumbou.

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287 The inhabitants are thrifty, intelligent and industrious, drying and exporting a large quantity of copra. There are extensive cultivated areas containing yams, sweet potatoes, etc., in the valleys. Considerable masi (tapa) is made.

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891 Lakemba was the first island in Fiji to be Christianized by British Missionaries (1853). The Provincial School, to which boys from all over Lau are sent, is situated near Tumbou.

[p. 10 is blank]

PRONUNCIATION OF WORDS FOUND IN THIS BOOK.

The Fijian language, subject to dialect variations, 197
is now used throughout the Lau Islands; though
probably in ancient times Southern Lau, at all
events, used a language much more akin to
modern Tongan.

The orthography is that used when the spoken 104
words were first reduced to writing by the earliest [997] ●
Missionaries, some of whom were skilled philo-
logists, about eighty years ago. They found
that there were certain sounds for which we
have no corresponding letters in the English
alphabet, and after many experiments they
decided that the best results were to be obtained,
and the necessity of introducing additional
letters avoided, by giving an entirely new sound
to certain of the letters of our own alphabet
that could best be spared. Thus Q is made to
represent a sound half-way between NG (hard)
and NK; and C is made use of to represent TH
(hard).

Just as a white man finds it difficult to pro- 104
nounce the peculiar clicks that occur in a Zulu's 194

INTRODUCTION.

THE three better-known groups of the Pacific, namely, the Crown Colony of Fiji, the recently captured German Colony of Samoa, and the last remaining independent Pacific kingdom of Tonga, form roughly the three points of an equilateral triangle, and the Lau Islands lie about midway between Fiji and Tonga. 131

These Lau Islands are situated some two hundred miles to the east of Fiji, and act as a barrier against the heavy storms that sweep the Pacific in those months of the year when "the trades" are at their strongest. And as might be expected from their geographical position it is upon these islands that straying vessels and storm-tossed wrecks (not only the big ships of the white man for the last hundred and fifty years, from buccaneers to whalers, and from whalers to modern "tramps," but also from earliest times the fragile canoes of the wayfaring Polynesian) have from time immemorial been flung. 174 797

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- 174
 • 797 It is thus that the Tongans were first driven here, with the important result that in after years early white missionaries from Tonga were able to introduce Christianity and civilization, with the help of descendants of these first native colonists who had kept up an intercourse with their brethren in Tonga. It is thus, indeed, that the first white men—"gods who ate fire," as the natives called them—set foot in these islands from an unknown ship wrecked on the Bukatanoa reef, towards the close of the eighteenth century. And from the Lau Islands all these influences passed on to Fiji itself.

- 131 The Lau group is scattered between 16° and 21° south latitude, and 178° and 180° west longitude—even at certain places extending well over the border into east longitude—or, roughly, two hundred and fifty miles long by one hundred and fifty miles broad. Thus they cover an ocean area of some thirty thousand square miles, though they are themselves, compared to other lands, mere specks in the ocean; the largest being but twenty-five miles long—and that length only because of its somewhat curved shape.

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Nevertheless they have a great importance from three points of view:

- 134 (a) *Utilitarian*, because they are by nature
 245 endowed with the choicest soil for coco-nut cultivation, which is made full use of, and thus

173 Among a people who have no written records
we must look to the old legends and fables and
fairy stories to give us some clue to the buried
secrets of the past, something to throw a light
on the mysterious and vague "time when the
race was young"; and snatch, before it is too
late, the already rapidly slipping cable that links
us with the olden time. The fairy stories of the
173 Polynesians were always of a kindlier and brighter
101 nature than the gloomy legends of the more
"Papuan" Fiji; and in the Lau Islands (which
are quite distinct from Fiji proper) the Poly-
nesian element may be roughly divided from the
Fijian by a line running from the north-east
to the south-west, having Lakeba Island and all
Southern Lau (Polynesian) to the east, and the
Moala group and Northern Lau (Fijian) to the
west. And the farther south one goes the more
strongly is the Polynesian in evidence, till in
the Ono group there is very little indeed to
remind one of Fiji at all.

173 It is very difficult nowadays to get the people
869 to speak of the old times, for the simple reason
797 that they are fast forgetting them; and even in
the oldest people, old Lauan ladies and gentle-
men (I use the term intentionally, for the manners
of the old people are always good, and very different
from those of many of their descendants), who were
born about the time when the *lotu*¹ first came to

¹ Christianity.

INTRODUCTION

19

Lau, just eighty years ago, were strictly forbidden, 173
perhaps wisely in those early days, to talk about 869
anything at all connected with their old mythology. 797
So that as children they did not hear from their
mothers the old tales that even one generation
before would have been so freely told to them.

However, in those islands where no resident
missionary was stationed, the rule was not so [123]
strictly enforced, and it is there that I have
been able to collect some of the most interesting
stories.

Stories of the gods are ethnologically the most 773
fascinating of all, especially among a totemistic 776
people; and the Polynesians in a general sense
were ancestor-worshippers, and held sacred [77]
certain beasts, birds, and fishes, wherein dwelt their
gods; although they never set up special idols
to them, as the Papuan race seems to have done.
The value of an old legend—when established and
corroborated—for purposes of ethnological inves-
tigation is immense, but on the other hand
there is always the danger that an imperfect
legend may lead one very much astray by setting
one's feet upon a track which proves false, and only
takes one farther away the more one pursues
it. An amusing instance of this occurred not 773
long ago. I was investigating the old snake 177
legend of Vulaga Island (an island, incidentally, 123
on which no snakes are ever found). A man told

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THE LAU ISLANDS

174 *Yalovaki* was brought from Samoa by a tribe
 177 now living on Lakeba Island, called the Leamaki ;
 695 and "Tui Leamaki" is a hereditary title used to
 this day by the head of that tribe. But it is
 purely a Polynesian custom, and was probably
 used by the Lauans in their previous country,
 before they came "from the East"; though it
 may have been resuscitated by the Leamaki
 people.

695 The procedure was for a suspected person to
 be brought into the centre of a ring composed of
 a council of chiefs, when the professor of *Yalo-*
vaki seated himself on the mat opposite "the
 defendant," and solemnly said to him, "Did you
 in very truth do this thing or not? If you lie
 concerning the matter, so will your soul be cap-
 tured this day." He then took a filmy scarf of
 finest *tappa*, and, immediately the answer was
 given, he twirled it over the man's head, as the
 Polynesians throw a cast-net, and if the man had
 lied, his soul was believed to be snared within
 it. Which belief, if the man really *had* lied, so
 weighed on his mind that he often went mad.
 177 Now comes the modern equivalent of the practice.
 627 The missionaries rightly stopped the *Yalovaki*,
 797 so the people felt bound to provide some sort of
 201 substitute. They saw in the earliest law courts
 154 the foreign method of "kissing the book," which
 caught their fancy immensely; so to this day

THE DUEL 'TWEEN GOD AND GHOST 93

Here we came to a level stretch of smooth, ^{too} hard sand and our horses raced along at the water's edge, as glad to stretch their limbs as we were to feel the cool breeze. Presently we drew up where some cliffs went straight down to the sea, and here we took a track that led inland for a little way towards the town of Mabula.

"You may have heard, sir," said Wiliami, ^{539*} chuckling, "concerning a former native magis- ⁷⁹⁷trate named Samani, and of his giving to the ¹⁷⁵ Mabula people their *lotu*¹ by means of a club. This was in the early days of the Government, and when the *lotu* had not been long in the land. Ratu Samani was a big chief from Lakeba Island, and he also considered that he was skilled in preaching; so he thought that it was his duty to make the heathen at Mabula believe in the new *lotu*. Therefore, on a certain Sunday he walked to Mabula and climbing into the pulpit in the native house that was then the church building for the use of the few who were believers, he told all the village that they must obey his *lotu* that he had brought with him. But the men of Mabula were *via via levu*,² for he was not a chief of their land, and would not listen to his words. So on the following Sunday he journeyed again to Mabula, though his friends would have dissuaded him, and this time he took with him his

¹ Religion.

² Insolent.

*539 war-club. Again he entered the pulpit and
 175 addressed the men of the town, and again were
 ● 797 they *via via levu* and laughed when he spoke.

"Great, then, was his anger, and he pulled off his white shirt—for he had on a foreign shirt which a missionary had given him—and stood upright in the pulpit, very fierce, and, holding aloft his club, 'Men of Mabula,' he cried, scornfully, 'if ye will not listen to my Bible, the Bible of the *lotu*, ye shall at least listen to the bible of Tui Lakeba' (the god of Lakeba); and he banged the club on the pulpit so that he almost broke the desk. Then were the men of Mabula much afraid and remained silent, and listened to his words; and never again did they mock in the church, for he warned them that he would return and beat them should such report reach him.

175 "But the Mabula people were ever unruly and
 648 turbulent; and I have heard that in the old days when the white chiefs first came here to plant cotton, and placed wire fences around their lands, the men of Mabula were for ever cutting these fences and stealing. So that once it was decided to teach them a lesson, and Misi Emesoni¹ (Ember-son) assembled all the whites together, armed, and with them all their labourers from Tanna²

¹ Afterwards the Hon. Mr. Emberson, Receiver-General of the Colony.

² In the New Hebrides.

THE SHARK-GOD

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white *tappa* that was spread out before the house on the level green turf. When she had comfortably settled herself down and lit the inevitable *suluka*, I asked her to tell me something of Dakuwaqa, and the other gods whom I had heard her mention from time to time.

"It is not for me to say much of Dakuwaqa," she began; "for are we not of the *lotu dina*¹ now? Even before I was born had the earliest missionary arrived at Lakeba. Though it was not till Tui Tubou's² visit—for which I helped to cook the feast—that most of this island were converted. I can only tell you what I have heard from our fathers and of what I myself remember when I was a girl.

"You must know, sir, that we of Northern Lau are of one kin with the people of Vanua Levu (Fiji), and until "the hoisting of the flag"³ we paid tribute to the Lords of Cakaudrove as our masters. But the men of Lakeba Island (who were also the rulers of all the islands to the south) never paid tribute to Cakaudrove, and were lords in their own right. And this is the story of how it came about.

"It was said that Tokairabe, the son of the god Tutumatua or Tui Lakeba, by the goddess Liku Cava, had made some magic fish-hooks

¹ True faith.

² The King of Tonga, who came on an evangelical mission to Fiji in 1853.

³ Cession to Great Britain.